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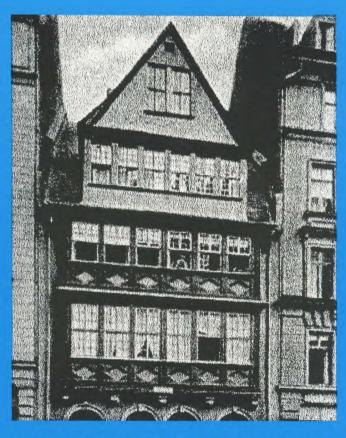
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16TH CENTURY ROTHSCHILD HOUSE IN FRANKFORT ON THE MAIN DESTROYED DURING WORLD WAR

## **OUR ORGANIZATION**

AMERICAN ISRAEL NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
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The American Israel Numismatic Association is a cultural and educational organization dedicated to the study and collection of Israel's coinage, past and present, and all aspects of Judaic numismatics. It is a democratically organized, membership oriented group, chartered as a non-profit association under the laws of The State of New York. The primary purpose is the development of programs, publications, meetings and other activities which will bring news, history, social and related background to the study and collection of Judaic numismatics, and the advancement of the hobby.

The Association sponsors major cultural/social/numismatic events such as national and regional conventions, study tours to Israel, publication of books, and other activities which will be of benefit to the members. Local chapters exist in many areas. Write for further information.

The Association publishes the SHEKEL six times a year. It is a journal and news magazine prepared for the enlightenment and education of the membership and neither solicits nor accepts advertising. All articles published are the views and opinions of the authors and may or may not reflect the views and opinions of A.I.N.A.

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#### **Edward Schuman, Editor**

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## The President's Message by Moe Weinschel

Dear Members,



We just attended the ANA "Worlds Fair of Money" held in Atlanta, Aug. 8-12, 2001. We can say that it was a "Good Show." There was plenty of publicity and the attendance was good in spite of the lack of public transportation. The popular ANA Passport program sold out Saturday afternoon.

AINA had a combined meeting with the IGCMC subscribers. We met with Mr. Eli Shahar, the Managing Director and Mr. Yossef Attali, Deputy Managing Director. They brought us up to date on current, new and proposed issues. There was a remarkable 12 medal prototype display of the Chagall windows in a tower format that was lit up internally showing the transparent medals as in the Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. - Watch for this new and exciting item!

We had much activity on the "Aina-Mule" error. There are not too many left, so you must make a decision soon if you want one of these medals.

Our board meeting had good reports about retaining and getting new members and a financial report, showing conservative management, which protects our assets. However, the drastic reductions in interest rates combined with the rising costs of postage for the Shekel mailings and other outside services has forced us to make a change in the dues as follows: Regular US - Canada and Mexico membership is now *CHAI* - \$18.00. All other Foreign is \$25.00 and Life membership will now be \$300.00.

As you know, we are a 501c Nonprofit, tax-exempt organization and we need your help. Please keep AINA in mind when you are making donations or adjusting your will. Our goal is to continue to make an AINA membership and Shekel subscription the "Best bargain in Numismatics"

Reminder: The AINA membership medal design contest is **ON** and we hope to receive your ideas and/or designs ASAP.

Shalom,

Moe

## ABOUT ROSH HASHANAH



#### SOUND THE GREAT SHOFAR OF OUR LIBERATION

The holiday falls on the beginning of the month of Tishrei which is the seventh month of the Hebrew year (Nissan being "the first month"). Its sign is Libra (scales, balance) as the world is judged in Tishrei and the scales are symbolic of weighing the merits and faults of those being judged.

In the Bible Rosh Hashanah is called Yom Teruah (the day of sounding the shofar) and represents two main ideas: the day on which a new year begins and the day of judgment and soul-searching. As the new year begins we take stock of the year that has ended and chart our course for the year to come.

The source for Rosh Hashanah in the Torah is in Numbers 29, 1: "In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a holy gathering, you shall not do any work. It is for you a day of sounding (the shofar)", and also in Leviticus 28,24: In the seventh month, on the first of the month, you shall have a Sabbath in commemoration of the sounding (of the shofar)". An allusion to Rosh Hashanah as a day of judgment is found in Psalms 81,4: "Blow the shofar at the time of new month, on the day the moon is yet unseen, on our holiday, for this is a statute for Israel, an ordinance of the G-d of Jacob".

The name Rosh Hashanah first appears in the Mishnah of Tractate Rosh Hashanah, chapter 1: "On Rosh Hashanah all the creatures of this world pass before Him (G-d) like a regiment of soldiers (before their commander who inspects them all). This is the day which determines the fate of mankind at the end of one year and the start of the next.

All the laws, prayers and customs express the meaning of the holiday. The central feature of the Rosh Hashanah prayers is the three-part mussaf (additional) service called "Malchuyot, Zichronot and Shofarot".

- 1. Malchuyot verses expressing the kingship of G-d (melech-king). Rosh Hashanah is the day of G-d's coronation as king of the universe as we say in the Malchuyot prayer: "Reign over the entire universe in Your Glory.
- 2. Zichronot Rosh Hashanah is the day of judgment for the whole world. In the Zichronot (Memories) prayer we recite: "When You call forth the measure of memory, to recall every living thing". We request that G-d "Remember us well before you and in a recollection of salvation and mercy."
- 3. Shofarot opens with the scene of Israel receiving the Torah on Mount Sinai. When Israel accepted the obligation to observe the Torah and its commandments the sound of the shofar was heard: "And it occurred on the third day in the morning there were thunder and lightning and a thick cloud upon the mountain and the very loud sounding of the shofar" (Exodus, 19, 16). The "Shofarot" prayer describes the greatness of G-d, continuing on to describe the ingathering of the exiles at the end of time: "On that day a great shofar will be sounded and those who were lost in Land of Assyria and those exiled in the Land of Egypt will come and bow down to the Lord at the holy mountain in Jerusalem" (Isaiah 27,13).

On Rosh Hashanah our prayers are not private, only on our own behalf. They appeal to G-d on behalf of all mankind: "Therefore, o Lord our G-d, instill fear of You in all those You created.. and all Your creations will fear You and bow before You".

The sounding of the shofar is the special commandment of Rosh Hashanah. Rav Sa'adiah Gaon lists ten reasons for it, among them:

- 1. This is our symbolic coronation of G-d as our King and so it is done before kings that trumpets and horns are sounded before them to proclaim the beginning of their reign. King David said: "With trumpets and the sound of the shofar make a great noise before the Lord our King" (Psalms 98,6)
- 2. The sounding of the shofar, is reminiscent of the time when Israel stood at the foot of Mount Sinai, that momentous occasion accompanied by "an extremely loud sounding of the shofar" where Israel unanimously proclaimed "we will do and we will listen".
- 3. The sounding of the shofar recalls the ingathering of the exiles of Israel which is promised to us in the future.
- 4. The shofar is made from a rams horn to remind us of the binding of Isaac. After Abraham had been tested by G-d and showed himself willing to sacrifice his son Abraham saw "a ram caught in the thicket by his horns and sacrificed it on the altar instead of his son Isaac the shofar therefore recalls the merit of our ancestors. Altogether one hundred notes are

sounded. When Rosh Hashanah occurs on Shabbat the shofar is not sounded because of a rabbinical decree.

Preparations for Rosh Hashanah begin a month ahead at the beginning of Elul. From then on it is customary to sound the shofar every morning after prayers in the Synagogue in order to call the people to repentance before the day of judgment. The Oriental and Sephardic Jews begin in Elul to recite "Selichot" (Forgiveness) prayed in the early morning hours. The Ashkenazi communities begin Selichot from the Saturday night before Rosh Hashanah.

Tashlich is a prayer recited on the first day of Rosh Hashanah near a riverbank or seashore or some other body of water (such as a well in Jerusalem, for example). This is a prayer for forgiveness for our sins and a request from G-d to carry out the words of the prophet "and throw into the depths of the sea all their sins" (Michah 7,19). In the Tashlich prayer we ask for a year of life, blessing, peace and the worthy fulfillment of all our wishes. We shake the edges of our clothing symbolically casting off the sins which have stuck to us" during the past year.

At the start of the holiday it is customary to greet one another with the blessing "May you be immediately inscribed and sealed for a good life".



The Rosh Hashanah medal is the third in the Jewish Holidays series issued by the Israel Government Coins & Medals Corp. The obverse depicts a learned Jew covered with a Talith (prayer shawl) blowing the Shofar. "Happy New Year" in English and Hebrew. "Day of the blowing of the Shofar" in Hebrew. The reverse: In the center in stylized lettering "Rosh Hashanah" which topped by a crown resembles the shape of a pomegranate. The Hebrew inscription of "New Year Blessing."

## MAYER AMSCHEL ROTHSCHILD GHETTO COIN DEALER

By Marvin Tameanko

The author wishes to thank Mr. Herbert Simson for translating the 18<sup>th</sup> century German text of the coin catalogs referred to in this article.

Mayer Amschel Rothschild, 1744-1812, fathered a financial dynasty that spanned most of Europe and later, the whole world. He compounded a small money lending shop in Frankfurt Am Main, Germany, into a great, multi-national banking house with branches in England, under the direction of his son Mayer Nathan, another in Italy headed by his son Karl Mayer, an institution in Vienna under his son Salomon Mayer, and one in France directed by his son James Jacob. Besides being wealthy the Rothschilds were great philanthropists supporting many Jewish and Christian charities, and later contributing greatly to the development of the State of Israel. Baron Edmond de Rothschild, of the French family, founded the first Jewish settlement and the wine industry in Palestine, earning him the title of the 'Father of Modern Israel'. The Rothschild Foundation continues the work of supporting Israel today. However, the original fortune of the Rothschild patriarch, Mayer Amschel, was created from a small business in coin dealing.

Jews in 18th century Frankfurt Am Main were confined to the dismal, overcrowded ghetto, called the 'Judengasse', (Jews' Street) and restricted to very limited methods of earning a living. Their freedom was so regulated that they had to wear special clothes or symbols and were locked up in the ghetto each night, on Sundays, and on Christian holidays. Jews were not even permitted to take surnames and instead used the identifying emblems on their houses as a family name. 'Rothschild', that is 'Redshield' was the sign on the original family house but the later Rothschilds actually lived in the house of the 'Greenshield'. The ghetto Jews were allowed to partake only in the rag and scrap business, the peddling of small goods and food to other Jews, and any other small venture that did not compete with or threaten the livelihoods of Christians. Also, money lending and pawnbroking activities, forbidden to Christians by the church, were two of the menial businesses that were left open to the ghetto Jews. For this reason, talented Jews had to explore new, innovative niches in the commercial world, unknown to their Christian neighbors.

Frankfurt was a great commercial center and many foreign coins circulated in its marketplaces. These coins, ducats, florins, carolins, Louis

d'Ors, thalers and gulden were struck in many different sizes and weights, and money changers were needed to convert them into the local, standardized currency. This lowly trade became the occupation of many ghetto Jews. The only sure way that Jews could advance their commercial opportunities and raise their status was by becoming agents for the royal courts and these so-called 'Court-Jews' could sometimes prosper.

In 1757, the recently orphaned boy, Mayer Amschel, was taken out of the Yeshiva (seminary) he attended in Furth, Bavaria, and apprenticed to the business firm of the Court-Jew, Wolf Jacob Oppenheim, in Hanover. Oppenheim had money changing and banking offices in several German cities and was very successful. Christians were reluctant to become royal court bankers because the rulers were above the law and often disregarded agreements or defaulted on commitments to repay loans. The Jewish bankers had no alternatives for clients and had to serve the royalty even though their patronage was often precarious and dangerous. While serving his seven-year apprenticeship in Hanover, Mayer developed an interest in coins. Perhaps at first it was a boyish distraction from the drudgery of hard work but, as his knowledge in coins increased, he became fascinated by the subject.

Hanover and Frankfurt must have been a coin collectors' paradise in those days. At the crossroads of the trade routes through Germany, coins from all over Europe and the German states circulated in these cities, and many of the coins were antiques, well over 100 years old. The Oppenheim bank in Hanover had a rare coin department, just as some large banks in Europe do today, and the young lad learned as much as he could from the experts working there. He also studied every book about coins he could lay his hands on and put his Yeshiva study techniques to work in order to memorize the information. By the time he was eighteen, Mayer had acquired enough knowledge to begin working behind the counter of the Oppenheim coin department. There he met many aristocratic clients who deposited coins as security for loans or purchased rarities as investments. Some of them privately commissioned the bright young lad to acquire the rare coins they needed for their collections. These first contacts with the nobility of Hanover would prove to be very useful in his life. Later, in fact, Mayer Amschel used these connections to royalty in order to win greater freedom and more civil rights for the Jews in Frankfurt.

In 1763, Mayer returned to Frankfurt and with his meager savings joined his brother Calmann in a money changing business in the ghetto, but he also added a counter in their shop for trade in rare coins, medals, small antiques and jewels.

This coin business did not generate much income but was meant to bring Mayer into contact with the noblemen who collected coins and then

perhaps lead to his becoming a commercial agent for the royal court. For this purpose, all of Mayer's profits from the change house were reinvested in the numismatic trade. One day, one of Mayer's contact recommended him to a young aristocrat, the Crown-Prince Wilhelm of Hesse. Hesse became a wealthy state by selling entire regiments of mercenary soldiers to the other European nations, and Hessian soldiers served King George III during the American Revolution in 1776. Wilhelm later became one of Rothschild's most important clients and, during the turmoil of the Napoleonic wars, Mayer managed most of the prince's financial affairs. The prince, the future Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel, made some small coin purchases from the young Mayer and, when he found he could trust him, commissioned him to seek out the rare coins he needed. The prince was so impressed with his good service that, on a request from Mayer, he appointed him a 'Court-Factor' for obtaining coins and medals. On this appointment, a sign bearing the coat-of-arms of Hesse, as a symbol of the royal patronage, was attached to the door of the house of Rothschild.ii

As a result of his new status, Mayer Amschel was able to arrange a marriage with Guttle Schnapper, a daughter of the Court-Factor to the Prince of Saxe-Meiningen, and she brought a dowry of 2,400 gulden to enlarge the very modest Rothschild fortune. Guttle was an exceptional woman, wise, hard-working, and dedicated to her family. When she was 94 years old and ailing her doctors told her that she would live for at least another couple of years. She replied in a serious business-like voice, "why would God take me at 96 when he could have me at 94?". This witticism is certainly one of the many amusing but mythical anecdotes that later grew up around the Rothschild family. During her long life, Guttle gave birth to between 16 and 19 children, accounts vary, only ten of whom survived infancy to become adults.

As a Court-Factor, Mayer Amschel was able to expanded his coin business by setting up a stall in the commercial fairs held in the cities all around Frankfurt. There he purchased whole collections of coins from destitute noblemen and sold coins to aristocrats who were the prime collectors of such rarities at that time. It was very fashionable for patricians to form an accumulation of coins, called a 'Cabinet', and many of these became the foundation for the great coin collections in national museums. When not attending fairs, Mayer published something similar to our modern-day, mail order catalogs and he sent them out to potential clients. The first catalog appeared in 1771 and others were issued periodically for the next 20 years. His customers eventually included many prominent noblemen such as the King of Bavaria and Duke Karl

August of Weimar. The coin catalogs were bound in leather, like fine books, and often ran to 16 pages in length. The items were advertised as 'Cabinet' coins, meaning they were suitable for inclusion in princely collections. Typically listed in the catalogs were gold and silver ancient Greek and Roman coins, as well as Spanish, German, French, English, Scottish and Swedish rarities.

The title page of a circa 1772 catalog stated, in a loose translation into English, that it was a, - "Price list of rare Cabinet style Thalers, listed according to (the handbooks of) Herr von Maday, all numbered, also a price list for very rare gold and silver coins, gold and silver Roman, Greek antiques, and pagan coins, at fixed prices". The name von Maday in the catalog refers to David Samuel Madai, a numismatist who classified the coins of Europe in a series of four popular manuals titled 'Vollstandiges Thaler-Cabinet' (The Complete Thaler Cabinet), published in 1765-1774. Typical of his times, Rothschild made many spelling and syntax errors in his catalog text and 'Maday' is his phonetic pronunciation of the name Madai.

Berzeichniß einer Anzahl rarer Cabinets: thaler, nach des Herrn von Maday vollstäns digen Thaler: Cabinet numerirt, wie auch eine Anzahl sebr rarer Gold: und Silber: Münzen, Gold: und Silberne Römische, Griechische, Anrique, und Hende nische Münzen; welche vor beystehende Preiße zu haben sind.

The heading of the cover page of a Rothschild coin catalogue dating to about 1772. It is printed in German Gothic script. From the Rothschild Collection in the Jewish Museum, Frankfurt.

The names and denominations of the European coins used in those days were very confusing with each independent state coining to its own standard of metal purity, size and weight. As a general explanation for the German coin terminology of that era, it can be said that the florin was originally a gold coin made in Florence, Italy of pure gold and it became a universal trade coin used throughout Europe. It had been adopted by the Germans who later debased it and called it the 'Gulden'. Eventually florins of high gold content were called ducats while those of debased gold were called gulden. By the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, a heavy silver gulden began to circulate alongside the golden florins and this was the predecessor of the famous silver thaler. The Monetary Reform Convention of 1753 standardized the coinage in Germany to some extent and the 'Convention' silver gulden was in common use in Frankfurt when the Rothschild catalogs were printed. The Frankfurt gulden of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century would

have had the purchasing power of about \$15 in today's money. The fractions of the gulden were called 'Kreuzer' the same name of a much older German coin, and a gulden was equal to 60 kreuzer. Small change in copper was provided for by coins called 'Heller' and 'Pfennig'. Two heller equaled 1 pfennig and 4 pfennig was equal to 1 kreuzer. All these related values and some of the names for the denominations changed from German state to state. When first introduced, the silver thaler was equivalent to the gulden but later, in various cities and because of the different sizes and amounts of silver contained in the coin, its value fluctuated between 1 ½ to 2 gulden. Also, many foreign gold coins circulated freely in the German states, the most famous being the French, gold Louis d'Or, which was tariffed as equal to 9 gulden.

Mayer Amschell also pioneered in the now well known sales technique of selling coins 'On Approval', that is sending coins by mail for a customer's inspection, with the unwanted coins sent back at Rothschild's expense. Also, his catalogs prefigured the modern day formats where each coin was numbered, described, referenced to David Samuel Madai's most recent numismatic handbooks, and priced in gulden and kreuzers, all in a tabular form. As well, the advertised list price was never 'firm' but open to negotiation. The principle of lower prices offset by the volume of 'turnover' in the coin business was well understood by Rothschild. Sometimes, Mayer included some comments about his newest acquisitions and the status of the coin market in his catalogs, or even wrote special notes to preferred clients. In this way he initiated the personal contact and friendly relationship with customers that is so highly regarded and sought after by many of our modern-day coin dealers.

The most popular coins for Rothschild's royal clients were the medallion-like artistic coins of the late medieval and Renaissance rulers of Europe. Many of the imperial persons shown on these coins were direct ancestors or relatives of the purchasers. Scarce thaler sized coins and their fractions, of French, Swedish and English rulers, appeared frequently in the price lists. In one catalog a silver coin struck for Henry II, king of Navarre, and later France, struck in 1584 was featured accompanied by a lengthy description. The coin was said by Mayer to be a thaler showing the king's bust, wearing a laurel headdress, and facing right, with the obverse legend of "Henricus II. d. g. Rex. Navarre". The reverse legend was given as "gratia dei. sum. id. q. sum.1584" around a combined shield of Navarre and France. As was customary in those days, non-capitalized letters were used for the abbreviations in the text. In his catalog Rothschild priced this coin at 4 gulden. This would have been equal in purchasing power to \$60 in modern money and the same coin can be purchased today for about \$150.



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The text of the listing in Rothschild's 1770 catalog for the silver coin of Henry II of Navarre. The line drawing shown above was not included in the catalog and is provided by the author for information only related to the description.

A photograph of an example of the above coin, advertised by Rothschild, taken from a 1996 coin auction catalog, where it sold for 240 Swiss francs. It is a silver ecu of Henri II (III) 1572-1589, Monnaies Feodales de France, Vol II, by F. Poey d'Avant, page 196, no. 3479.





From the humble beginnings of his coin business, which provided for the links to noblemen with large sums of money to invest, Mayer Amschel branched out into arranging for letters of credit, providing loans to merchants and aristocrats, and trading in commodities such as English textiles, Jamaican tobacco, South American coffee and Russian hides. From this extensive commerce, the Rothschilds rapidly ascended to the heights of international merchant banking and established a financial dynasty which has never been surpassed in history. But Mayer never forgot his fascination with old coins nor their influence on his life. It is reported that when his brother Calmann died in 1782, and Mayer became sole proprietor of the money exchange, he still issued his coin catalogs, attended the seasonal fairs buying and selling coins, and lovingly worked the coin counter in his store while his wife, Guttle, handled the more serious business of discounting bills and making loans. In August 1812, one month before he died and despite his failing health and complex international businesses. Rothschild was still seriously involved in the coin trade. In that month, he offered a superb collection of 303 rare, old coins and medals to Karl Theodore von Dalberg, the Grand Duke of Frankfurt, for only 5,500 gulden, "at no profit to himself". A true and dedicated coin dealer, and a loyal Court-Agent to the very end.

#### Notes & Bibliography

- 1. Rothschild, A Story of Wealth and Power by D. Wilson, A. Deutsch, London, 1998 page 9
- 2. The Rothschilds, Portrait of a Dynasty by F. Morton, Kodansha, NY 1998 page 21
- 3. The House of Rothschild by Niall Ferguson, Viking, NY 1008, page 42 but the numismatic author is given in this text as Maddai
- 4. Bavarian State Archives. The Dalberg Papers, 25, page 173. August 1812

#### The Wild Goat and Shittah Tree (Acacia) Commemorative Coin

Acacia is the name of a tree of Israel considered to be identical with the shittah tree. In the past it was extensively used for construction. Today it is planted to beautify the arid regions of Israel. Acacia-wood is mentioned repeatedly (Ex. 25–27) as the sole wood used in the construction of the Tabernacle. The word also appears as several biblical place names: Shittim near Gilgal (Num. 25:1; etc.,); "And all the brooks of Judah... shall water the valley of Shittim" (Joel 4:18); and Beth-Shittah near Beisan (Judg. 7:22). According to Isaiah, acacia trees would line the path of the returning exiles, and would make the wasteland bloom at the time of redemption (Isa. 4:19).

There is almost universal agreement that the shittah is to be identified with the acacia. Several species of the tree grow in Israel, mostly in the wadis of the Judean desert and in the southern Negev. It is thorny and has leaves compounded of small leaflets. The yellow flowers are small and grow in globular clusters. It is not tall and its trunk is thin and generally bent sideways. It is therefore somewhat difficult to identify this tree with the shittah from which the Tabernacle boards "a cubit and a half the breadth of each" (Ex. 26:16) were cut.

Noting this difficulty, the Midrash already asked the question: Where in the desert were our forefathers able to find acacia-wood? One solution suggests that the trees were brought from Migdal Zevo'aya in the Jordan Valley near the mouth of the Yarmuk and that a small forest existed there (Gen. R. 94:4). Regarded as holy, its trees were not cut down by the local inhabitants. At present, a small grove of Acacia albida, tall trees with thick trunks, which, in contrast to the other species in Israel, grows only in non-desert regions, stands there. This species must have been the "acacia-wood standing up," i.e., with an erect trunk, which provided the wood for the Tabernacle and its accessories. This tropical tree, too, would transform the desert, according to Isaiah, in contrast to the other varieties of acacia which had always grown in the dry regions. This wood is very hard, but light. It does not absorb moisture and so its volume remains constant. It is, therefore, most suitable for construction and was used in shipbuilding.

The wild goat, is an animal permitted for food. Only the wild goat, called ibex and the gazelle have survived from over ten species of cloven-hoofed ruminants which inhabited Erez Israel in former times. Because of its tasty meat, the ibex was much sought after by hunters but escaped extinction through its ability to exist on precipitous mountains in

desert regions, such as En-Gedi, Elath, and the Negev heights. Able to jump from rocks and to climb steep rock faces, it was called ya'el in Hebrew (and wa'l in Arabic), a word derived from the root meaning "to ascend."

The "rocks of the ibex" in the neighborhood of En-Gedi have served as a hiding place at various times. David fled there from Saul (I Sam. 24:1-3) and Bar Kokhba's fighters took refuge in the caves.

Ibex live in herds. The male has horns reaching up to 39 inches in height, the female short, sharp ones. The beauty of the ibex and the remarkable way it lives among the rocks of the desert have been used as poetic motifs (Job 39:1: Ps. 104:18): the name va'alat hen (a graceful female ibex) is given to a beautiful woman (Prov. 5:19). Jael (Judg. 4:17) and Jaalah (Ezra 2:56), both derived from the Hebrew for ibex. occur in the Bible as women's names. A shofar made of the long horn of an ibex was blown in the Temple on the New Year (RH 3:3) and to proclaim the Jubilee year (RH 3:5).

The Wild goat and the Acacia tree are the motifs for the 9th and last coin in the Biblical Wildlife series. The coin, struck in both silver and gold varieties, is available from the A.I.N.A. new issues department.

In your editor's opinion, this new coin must be included amongst the most beautifully designed and executed Israeli issues. It certainly deserves consideration for the prestigious "Coin of the Year" award.



#### THE METAL TOKENS OF KIBBUTZ EINAT

#### By Ady Bar-Tov

Kibbutz Einat was one of many Kibbutz which issued tokens as trade coins in 1964/5. In a kibbutz every member works for his livlihood. The kibbutz, in return for the labor of the members, provides items such as food, shelter, clothing, shoes, health care, schooling for children etc. The primary reason for the kibbutz to issue tokens was as a way to improve the standard of living of the members by providing them the opportunity to purchase luxury or personal items, or items normally not available in the kibbutz itself. It is almost impossible to accumulate a complete collection of the thousands of different issues of Kibbutz paper and cardboard tokens.

One of the first to attempt to catalog kibbutz tokens was the late Sylvia Haffner. In her book *Judaic Tokens and Medals*, issued by A.I.N.A. in 1978, and now out of print and difficult to obtain, she devotes many pages to this subject and gives a short description of each kibbutz, which issued tokens. On page 286, she writes "Kibbutz Einat is a member of Ihud Ha'kvutzot Vehakibbutzim, and was founded in 1952, east of Petah Tikva, and issued two types of tokens. The tokens were issued to members in various forms. She describes three paper tokens, 1, 5 and 10 lirot printed on the obverse, in Hebrew, "Kibbutz Einat, personal budget/ with the denomination."

The 2<sup>nd</sup> type, and an issue unique to kibbutz issues, is a series struck on anodized aluminum planchets, 22m in diameter and holed. Haffner lists these as 1 agora gold, 5 agorot silver, 10 agorot green, 25 agorot red and 50 agorot blue. The obverse have the word Einat week in Hebrew, and the denomination. The reverse side of all of the tokens is blank.

I was curious to learn why, of the hundreds of kibbutz, that Einat was the only one to issue metallic tokens. All of the other Kibbutz issued tokens using paper or cardboard.

I interviewed two members of the kibbutz who supplied the answers. Mrs. Anat Dagai is the daughter of the kibbutz electrician who, because of his technical instinct, was the one who made the decision. He decided that wear and tear on paper tokens was such that they would have to be reissued constantly and it almost would be impossible to maintain records. While the cost to manufacture metal token would be more expensive, they would outlast the paper ones and be less expensive in the long run.

It was also thought that as the tokens were going to serve in a closed community with high morality, there would be no need to take any precautions against forgery and therefore the die to strike these tokens

could be very simple. In fact the tokens were manufactured from angular, semi-hard aluminum discs and a simple hand die. The die included the name "Einat" and the denomination, without a unit name. To reduce the costs even further, all the denominations were of the same size and for faster identification the tokens were anodized in five colors as follows:

1 light gold, 5 natural aluminum, 10 dark green. 25 dark pink, 50 blue.

The reason they were holed was so they could be placed on spindles for segregation or for counting purposes.

Now to correct an error on Mrs. Haffner's part. The legal tenders in the market at that time were the Agora and Lira. (100 Agorot = 1 Lira). The value of 1 Agora had no value and the *Tzarchania* the supermarket of the kibbutz could offer nothing to the members for a single Agora. In fact the cost to manufacture even a paper Agora was greater than its market value. Therefore it was an error to attribute to the denomination 1 the unit value of Agora. If you compare the size of the number 1, it is larger than all other numerals. Also the color gold is a distinguished one. Therefore the unit value of the 1 is Lira, a fact confirmed by members of the kibbutz.

There were also two sub-varieties. Among the 10 Agorot tokens were a dark green and a light green color. The reason for the difference was quickly found. Several kibbutz members complained because of color blindness, they could not easily identify the two denominations, 10 green and 50 blue. The solution was for the kibbutz to order more 10 Agorot tokens but this time in a light green. The older ones remained in circulation.

A few of the 5 Agorot tokens were found with a larger diameter of 27mm and without the inscription "Einat" above the denomination. These tokens were sent by a manufacturer as samples but were rejected by the kibbutz because of the size and the absence of the name. They were not destroyed however, and eventually placed in circulation. Their quantity is unknown.

The tokens of Kibbutz Einat are quite rare and almost unknown. Most were discarded and it was with diligence that I was able to accumulate three sets from Kibbutz members who were not aware of their importance. It is sad that after only 37 years have elapsed since these were struck we cannot find the name of the firm who struck them nor the mintage.



## THE POMEGRANATE

Pomegranates are sometimes known as Chinese apples," and at first glance a pomegranate does look something like an apple: just a bit larger and with a faintly yellow roseate blush to its skin. Look a little more closely through and you will notice that the skin is dull and leathery without an apple's clear shine and the fruit is softer, gnarled and often mishaped. But cut it open and the pomegranate discloses its hidden treasure: hundreds of glistening red seeds packed into pale membranes like rubies in cotton.

The *Tapuach*, the fruit of Eden's tree of knowledge has for many centuries been depicted as an apple but some scholars now think that the real forbidden fruit was more likely intended to be a pomegranate. Although this in itself seems unlikely (most historical clues point to the apple). No other fruit may be quite so redolent with meaning to the Jewish people as is the pomegranate. Native to northern Persia, the pomegranate is one of the world's oldest cultivated fruits, having first been domesticated around 4000 BCE.

Carbonized pomegranates have been found in a tomb in Jericho that dates to the Bronze Age. The Egyptians began importing pomegranates from the Holy Land around 1150 BCE, and the pomegranate was a favorite treat of the Hebrews living in Egypt, who pressed refreshing juice from its seeds and sometimes made a spiced wine from it. Pomegranate wood, which was considered the driest of all woods, was also carved into skewers used to roast the Pascal lamb.

Wandering the desert, the Hebrews yearned for the pomegranates and other fruits they had left behind in Egypt, challenging Moses to explain why he had led them to "a place of no seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates." Moses was concerned enough about this backsliding that he sent spies out into Canaan to reconnoiter the territory. He then reported back to his people (recorded in Deuteronomy 8:8) that God was leading them into a prosperous land, "a land of wheat and barley, of vines, of fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey."

King Solomon is said to have maintained a grove of pomegranate trees (surely a sign of wisdom), and the pillars of his temple in Jerusalem were festooned with hundreds of brass pomegranates.

Images of pomegranates were on the faces of coins (namely, the silver shekel of Jerusalem, in circulation during the second century BCE).

They were also woven onto the hem of priestly robes, between bells of pure gold, according to the book of Exodus.

Pomegranates are referred to again and again in the Bible, including no fewer than six times in the greatest love poem of all, the Song of Songs. One of the Song's lovers, for instance, praises the other, "The curve of your cheek [is] a pomegranate in the thicket of your hair," and then again shortly after, "Your branches are an orchard of pomegranate trees heavy with fruit.

Throughout the Bible the pomegranate is a symbol of luxury, abundance and joy; in Joel 1:12, to take one example, the prophet laments that the pomegranate tree has withered, because joy has withered among the sons of men. Over time the pomegranate came to represent in the Jewish mind fertility itself, obviously owing to the copiousness of its seeds. (According to kabbalistic lore, a pomegranate contains 613 seeds, precisely the number of mitzvot Jews are commanded by God to obey; empirical observations, needless to say, do not bear out this assertion.)

As a symbol of abundance and fertility, the pomegranate has long been part of Jewish rituals to welcome the New Year. Sephardic Jews eat a slice of pomegranate during the Rosh Hashanah feast, reciting the prayer: "May it be Your Will, 0 Creator, that our year be rich and replete with blessings as the pomegranate is rich and replete with seeds." In Egypt pomegranate seeds are eaten sprinkled with orange blossom water and sugar at the end of the Rosh Hashanah meal. In North Africa, Rosh Hashanah is celebrated with a sweet couscous sprinkled with pomegranate seeds. On the second night of Rosh Hashanah, it is customary to eat at least one "new" fruit, one that has not eaten during the past year. Among Ashkenazic and Sephardic families alike, that fruit is often a pomegranate.

The pomegranate has been a motif on several coins and medals of Israel. Several illustrate this article which appeared in the "food" section of



### AN E-BAY AUCTION ITEM

by Edward Schuman

One never knows what will turn up on the E-Bay internet auction sites. While browsing through the Israel Paper money section I was amazed to find an original drawing of the proposed 4th series Five Pound banknote of Israeli paper money signed by Shamir, the graphic artist. To answer the why and how and when, a little research brought forth the following:

When the Bank of Israel was established in December 1955 a new series of paper money bearing the name of the bank was issued. The face of each note showed a landscape partly enclosed by a frame of fruits. Each note had a watermark, a seven branched menorah partly covered by one of the charactristic flowers of the country. The reverses had an abstract design.

These notes were not well received by the public and the newspapers. The front side was said to be overloaded with too many themes, landscapes, fruits, trees and flowers. The colors were not adapted to the pictures and the abstract designs on the reverses allowed all too realistic associations to be made such as snails, starfish, gramaphone records and even flying saucers.

In view of the opposition, the Advisory Committee of the Bank, under the presidency of E.L. Hoofien was entrusted to prepare a fourth series of banknotes to be released at the earlies possible dates. The following principles were to be enacted:

- 1- to abandon the frames around the designs
- 2- to print thenotes in a monochromatic manner
- 3- to adapt the color to the content of the main design
- 4- to devote the front to the Israel of today, the back to the past
- 5- to represent on the front side of each note one of the main occupations of modern Israel. and the back side an archeological object.

According to these principles the 5 pound note would be light brown in color, show as occupation an industrial worker, and the back side would feature the Seal of Shema.

Following a competition among designers and artists, the Advisary committee accepted most of the proposals of the Shamir Brothers. The brothers G and M Shamir were born in Latvia, studied graphic art and came to Israel in 1933. They are responsible for many designs used on the coins and stamps of Israel as well as the stamps of many African countries.

For those interested in the auction price, the opening bid was

\$1650.





## Dome of the Rock: &P1 Rotes of the Palestine Currency Board Depict Site of Religious Unrest Through the Ages (Reprinted from Coin World by Permission) by Dr. Howard III. Berlin, RLG

On October 8, 1990, there was a bloody clash between Jews and Palestinian Arabs which focused the world's attention towards Jerusalem's Old Temple Mount and the adjoining Wailing Wall. Arabic names such as al-Haram al-Sharif (The Noble Sanctuary) and Masjid al-Aqsa (Al-Aqsa Mosque) were often used by television reporters to flavor their news stories and soon became household words. In late September 2000, riots again broke out on this historical and hallowed piece of real estate. Unfortunately, these acts of violence were nothing new, for one example, it was also here that King Abdullah of Transjordan was assassinated in 1951.

The Temple Mount is dominated by Qubbat al-Sakhra — the Dome of the Rock — which has religious significance for both Jews and Muslims. Its vignette appears on the face of all £P1 notes issued by the Palestine Currency Board as legal tender during the British Mandate of Palestine. Located at the summit of the biblical Mount Moriah in eastern Jerusalem, the Dome of the Rock is considered the most recognizable scene attributed to the skyline of Jerusalem and holds many stories.



Even in the early days of the British Mandate, both the Palestine Currency Board and the League of Nations were aware of the sensitive thread. connecting the two religions

Historically, both Jews and Muslims trace their origins from the biblical patriarch Abraham — Muslims through his first son Ishmael by Hagar, a handmaiden; Jews through Isaac by his wife Sara. It was Sara who, out of jealousy, had Abraham banish Hagar and Ishmael into the desert, both of whom later traveled to Mekkah.

#### Banknotes of the Palestine Currency Board

The Palestine Currency Board was first appointed in 1926 by the British secretary of state for the colonies, and was in charge of the introduction and control of currency in Palestine under the British Mandate. The activities of this board were completely independent of local government and were similar to the boards established in both West Africa

and East Africa. On February 7, 1927, The Palestine Currency Order created the Palestine pound (£P) which was divided into 1000 mils. The 1927 Currency Order specified that banknotes be issued in denominations of 500 mils, £P1, £P5, £P10, £P50, and £P100. The banknotes were issued from November 1, 1927 on the eve of the tenth anniversary of the Balfour Declaration until the termination of the mandate on May 14, 1948. After the end of the Palestine Mandate, the banknotes issued by the Palestine Currency Board still remained legal tender in Israel, Egypt (Gaza Strip), and Jordan up until September 15, 1948, June 9, 1951, and September 30, 1950 respectively. Beyond these dates, all Palestine currency was demonetized and outstanding notes are still able to be redeemed today by the crown agents in London at a rate on par with the pound sterling.

The banknotes were printed by the London firm of Thomas de La Rue and Company, Limited. Each denomination, both in figures and words, were given in trilingual legends and inscriptions in English, Arabic, and Hebrew — the three official languages for Palestine — as required by Article 22 of the League of Nation's Mandate of Palestine. The vignettes chosen were supposed to be sites in Palestine having religious significance to both Jews and Muslims. These included: Rachel's Tomb (Bethlehem), the Dome of the Rock (Jerusalem), the Crusader's Tower (Ramlah), and the Citadel and Tower of David (Jerusalem). Other sites that were proposed but did not appear on the final designs included the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (Jerusalem), Absalom's Pillar (Jerusalem), the al-Jazzar Mosque (Acre), and the Dome of the Rock and Dome of the Chain (Jerusalem).



In particular, the £P1 notes are the second lowest and most common denomination of all the Palestine Currency Board notes and were issued with four dates: September 1, 1927, September 30, 1929, April 20, 1939, and January 1, 1944. Of these, the 1927 issue is the rarest while the 1929 issue is considered the most common for the £P1 series. Besides being legal tender in Palestine, £P1 banknotes were also legal tender on the crown colony of Cyprus from May 5 to November 17, 1942 owing to a temporary shortage of Cypriot £1 notes.

#### Site Significant to Jews and Muslims

The face vignette of the £P1 banknote of the Palestine Currency Board illustrates the historic Dome of the Rock, which was the first great Islamic shrine and is situated on the highest point of a 30-acre almost rectangular esplanade, called in Arabic al-Haram al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary), or Har Ha'bavit (the Temple Mount) in Hebrew. It is here that once stood the First Temple (Solomon's Temple, 960-587 B.C.) and the Second Temple (538 BC-70 A.D.). All that remains today is the Western Wall (Hebrew, Ha'kotel Ha'maaravi), or "Wailing Wall," which is a section of the defense rampart which encircled the Temple Court. As a retaining wall, a large portion of the wall is buried below ground level which may actually date from the First Temple. The "Wailing Wall" name was applied to it because Jews came here pray and bewail the destruction of the Temple and their subsequent exile. Muslims refer to the Western Wall as Hait al-Burag (the Burag Wall) after the place where Muhammad's half mule-half donkey with wings, named al-Buraq (the Lightning), waited while Muhammad was escorted by the archangel Jibra'il (Gabriel) to the Temple Mount. In the time when the First and Second Temples existed, only the High Priest could enter the Temple's Holy of Holies, and only on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) — the holiest day on the Jewish calendar. In ancient times it was to this point and no further that observant Jews would approach the Temple Mount. Because the exact location of the Holy of Holies on the Temple Mount is now uncertain, religious Jews refrain from proceeding beyond the Western Wall, lest they unknowingly enter the area that was once was the most hallowed and forbidden area of the Temple. As such now, the Wailing Wall is Judaism's most sacred shrine.

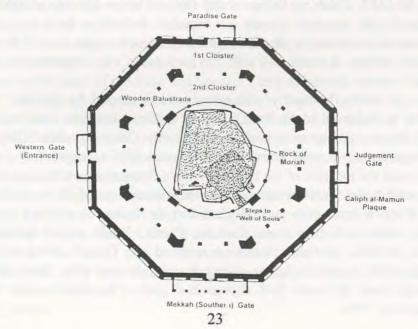
For Muslims, the Dome of the Rock ranks third in sanctity after the Ka'aba meteor stone in Mekkah, said to have been erected by Abraham and Ishmael, and the Tomb of the Prophet in Medina — both are located in present day Saudi Arabia.

#### Roman, Crusader, and Islamic Control

After Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the Second Temple in 70 A.D., the Romans under Hadrian both rebuilt and renamed the city as Aelia Capitolina in 136, and erected a pagan temple in honor of Jupiter atop the sacred rock. Aelius was Hadrian's family name, and Capitolina Jupiter was the chief Roman god.

In 638, the second caliph, Omar ibn al-Khattab captured Jerusalem and asked the Christian Patriarch, Sophronious, to take him to the Haram. Upon reaching the site, Omar was so shocked to see the area covered with dung and refuse, that he made Sophronious crawl through the filth on his hands and knees as punishment for the Christian desecration of the holy Muslim site. After the site was cleaned, Omar built an initial shrine of wood and clay over the sacred rock.

The Dome of the Rock is also known as the "Mosque of Omar," a name given to it by the crusading Franks who in error believed it to be the fabled Second Temple. In fact, the Mosque of Omar is neither a mosque, nor was it built by Omar. As we now know it, Qubbat al-Sakhra was a shrine built in 691 by the fifth Umayyad Caliph, Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan. Intended to be an architectural rival to the Christian Church of the Holy Sepulcher in its size and proportions, Abd al-Malik as the ninth successor to the Prophet Muhammad, built the Byzantine-styled dome as a substitute shrine for the obligatory Muslim pilgrimage to Mekkah. Its construction was financed by utilizing all the taxes collected in Egypt for seven years.



The Dome is an octagonal structure 177 feet high and 72 feet in diameter with a frieze of yellow Cufic script from Sura XVII:1 (Bani Isra'il - The Children of Israel), on turquoise and deep blue tiles outside. The "sacred mosque" (Masjid al-Haram) mentioned in this Qur'anic verse refers to the mosque at Mekkah, while the "farthest mosque" (Masjid al-Aqsa) also mentioned refers either to Jerusalem or to the entire Haram because the al-Aqsa mosque did not yet exist in the days of Muhammad.

Besides this verse from the Qur'an, another Arabic inscription of note, located above the eastern cornice, originally read: "This dome was built by Abd al-Malik, son of Marwan, the Commander of the Faithful, in the year seventy two, and Allah has accepted it from his hand, and he has conferred this blessing upon it. Amen." Although the inscribed Hijra date of 72 A.H. (691 A.D.) was during Abd al-Malik's reign, the name of the Abbasid Caliph, al-Mamum, was forged and substituted in the year 831 following repairs to the dome. The forgery is easily detected as the added mosaic tiles are of a darker blue color while the letters of al-Mamum's name are spaced closer together.

In 1016, the Dome of the Rock was severely damaged by an earthquake and was repaired and strengthened six years later. In 1067, another earthquake struck Jerusalem. This time the sacred rock was split, but the building escaped severe damage. On July 15, 1099 the Crusaders led by Godfrey de Bouillon conquered Jerusalem and Godfrey's brother King Baldwin II later converted the structure into a church of the Knights Templars, naming it Templum Domini (Temple of the Lord) in honor of Jesus. In 1187, Salah ad-Dunya wa'ad-Din — better known as Saladin, founder of the Ayyubid dynasty — captured Jerusalem from the Latin Kingdom and restored the Muslim shrine to its previous glory. In 1270, the Mamluke sultan al-Malik al-Zahir Baybars made improvements to the rotunda's mosaic decoration.

In 1448, the roof of the dome was destroyed by fire and was restored by Sultan al-Malik ibn Dhabir to be more beautiful than before. Impressive renovations were made in 1552 by the Ottoman sultan Suleiman the Magnificent — also known as al-Qanuni (the Lawgiver) — who transformed the exterior of the building from a Byzantine to a Persian style. Of these changes, the most notable was the replacement of all 16 windows in the Dome's drum with stained glass and the facing of sections of the outside walls with tiles from Kasham, Persia. While under Jordanian control in 1958, another restoration replaced the Dome's 200-ton lead sheeting with a special lighter aluminum and bronze alloy from Italy, weighing over 30 tons, that shines like gold. The latest work was completed in 1994.

Around the interior of the dome near its top is a circular frieze reciting the Bismilla ("In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful") and the Ayat al-Qursi (Verse of the Throne) passage from Sura II:255 (al-Baqara - The Cow). Also inside, at the top of the Dome's drum, are other quotations from the Qur'an which underscore statements about the faith of Islam (Sura III:18-19; XIX:33; XXXIII:54) and those that reject Christianity's concepts of both the Trinity and the Immaculate Conception (Sura IV:171; XVII:111; CXII:1-3).

#### The Rock of Abraham and Muhammad

The rock itself, called al-Sakhra in Arabic, is about 56 feet long by 42 feet wide and rises out of the floor to approximately five feet surrounded by a broad wooden balustrade. As it was once believed that the rock was the foundation marking the center of the earth, which in Medieval times was considered not to be round but flat, Jews often refer to the rock in Hebrew as *Even Ha'sh-ettiyah* (The Stone of Foundation). On the maps of the Middle Ages, Jerusalem was placed at the omphalos — the center, or navel of the world.

Sharing a common focal point for Jews and Muslims, the rock within the dome holds many stories. As is described in the Torah reading of Genesis 22:2 on the second day of Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year), it was on this point of Mount Moriah that the Akedah — the binding of Isaac for sacrifice — took place. In this biblical passage, Abraham was to heed God's instructions to bind his son Isaac on an altar and sacrifice him to God as a test of his faith. Also, It was on this rock that King David (c. 1000 B.C.) purchased this site as the home for the ark of the covenant from Ornan the Jebusite (I Chronicles 21:22-25). Here was to rest the Holy of Holies as the heart of the First and Second Temples.

Since Muslims also venerate Abraham (Ibrahim) as both a prophet and patriarch, the Qur'an, also gives an account of the Akedah in Sura XXXVII:103 (al-Saffat - The Ranks). In this verse, the Arabic word aslama (submit) is used, from which Islam — i.e., the submission of oneself to God — derived its name.

According to Islamic lore, angels visited the rock 2,000 years before Adam was created and Noah's ark rested here after the biblical flood. All the prophets of God prior to Muhammad are believed to have prayed at the rock which is surrounded daily by 70,000 angels. Furthermore, it is here that Israfil, the four-winged Angel of Death will blow the last trumpet on the Resurrection Day when the dead rise from their graves.

Also according to Islamic belief, the Prophet Muhammad (c. 571-632) was on a journey at night (al-Isra) from Mekkah to Medina. Riding on al-Buraq, Muhammad was escorted by the archangel Jibra'il to the Temple Mount. Entering the Haram through a gateway (Bab al-Nabi-Gate of the Prophet), both Muhammad and Gabriel stood atop the rock and ascended up a ladder of light through the seven heavens and stood before the almighty Allah.

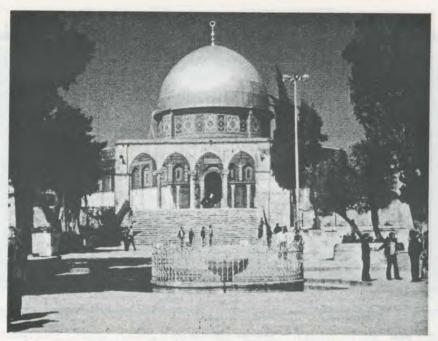
On the south side of the rock, there is an appearance of a footprint. One legend says that this was made by Abraham, while another claims that it was made by the Prophet Muhammad on his ascent to heaven from the rock. The indentation is known as either Kadam al-Nabi (Heel of the Prophet) or Kadam al-Sharif (Heel of the Noble One). When the rock was in Christian hands during the Crusades, the indentation quite naturally was called the "Footprint of Jesus." Near the indentation is a small box which reportedly holds a few hairs of Muhammad's beard.

Besides the "footprint" on the west side of the rock is another indentation, "The Handprint of Gabriel," where Gabriel was to have held down the rock when it was about to rise with Muhammad. However, it should be noted that Crusaders were usually prone to chip souvenir pieces from the rock, which in time would result in the indentations similar to the believed footprint and handprint.

Through an opening called Bab al-Meghara (Gate of the Cave) at the rock's southeast corner, eleven steps descend to a six-foot high subterranean cave carved out of the rock. In this cave, called Bir al-Arwah (Well of Souls) by Arabs, it is believed that the souls of the dead assemble here twice weekly to hold prayers. In the Well of Souls are locations where it believed that the Prophets Elijah and Muhammad, and the Kings David and Solomon prayed.

#### Al-Qas and the Al-Aqsa Mosque

Also pictured on the standard £P1 notes in front of the Dome of the Rock is the Southern, or Mekkah Gate and al-Qas (the cup), the ablution fountain where observant Muslims are commanded to obey the wudkhu (required ritual ablutions preparatory to prayers) five times daily mentioned in Sura V:6 (al-Ma'idah - The Table Spread). Built in 709 by Sultan Tanqiz, al-Qas is attached to numerous underground cisterns on the Temple Mount. Beyond the fountain is one of eight graceful al-Mawazin (arcades) at the head of stairways leading up to the Dome of the Rock. Sura XXI:47 (al-Anbiya'a - The Prophets) says that the scales upon which the weighing of the souls of men will take place on the Day of Judgment will be hung from these arcades.



Not seen on the £P1 notes in front of the Dome of the Rock's southern "Mekkah Gate" (also called the Qibla Gate) and the al-Qas fountain is the al-Aqsa Mosque — the "farthest mosque" mentioned in the Qur'an. Although the mosque is considered by some to have been originally a basilica built by Justinian in 536 in honor of St. Mary, it was really built by the Caliph al-Walid al-Malik in 715 over the remains of the Hulda Gates of the Second Temple. As the Dome of the Rock was not a place of prayer but rather a shrine protecting the sacred rock, the al-Aqsa Mosque was then built as the first place of prayer for Muslims on the Haram. Israeli Jews often refer to the al-Aqsa Mosque by its Hebrew name, *Midrash Shelomo Ha'melech* — The Study House of King Solomon — as according to legend, this was the of area of the Temple Mount that King Solomon studied the Torah and composed the biblical books of Song of Songs, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.

#### The Dome of the Chain

Countries often print trial specimens for governmental approval. In October 2000, a series of Palestine Currency Board trial specimen notes were auctioned. What made these notes different was the colors and vignettes are different from those of the issued notes. For the £P1 trial specimen, the vignette illustrates a different view of the Dome of the Rock — without the al-Qas fountain and the arcade — and includes the neighboring structure, Qubbat al-Silsila, or the Dome of the Chain.



Like the larger Dome of the Rock, the Dome of the Chain located to the East is an octagonal structure but it lies at the exact center of the Haram rather than the more impressive and significant Dome of the Rock. It has been speculated by some that the Dome of the Chain is the omphalos instead of the famous rock associated with the prophets Abraham and Muhammad. The structure is open on all sides with six inner and 11 outer supporting pillars in an arrangement of two rows of concentric columns that allows all 17 columns to be seen at the same time when viewed from any angle.

The purpose of the structure has never been fully explained but it is generally accepted that the builder was same as for the Dome of the Rock — Abd al-Malik. One theory was that for the expenses needed for building the Dome of the Rock, Abd al-Malik is said to have set aside an amount equal to the tax revenues from Egypt for seven years. Thus, the Qubbat al-Silsila is thought by some to have served as a bayt al-mal (treasury) for, in Umayyad times, the bayt al-mal was traditionally adjacent to the mosque. But on the Haram, the mosque was that of al-Aqsa, not the Dome of the Rock. So much for the "treasury" theory. In years after construction of the Dome of the Rock was completed, the Dome of the Chain was also thought by some to have been converted to a storehouse for the rare spices and incenses that perfumed the larger shrine.

Another theory is that the Dome of the Chain was a model for the Dome of the Rock, although the Qubbat al-Sakhra is an enclosed structure.

It is said that Abd al-Malik was unwilling to commit himself to the construction of the Dome of the Rock without first examining a model of the proposed structure. But then several questions arise. Why would a model be left intact once the actual building was completed? Why was it built so close to its intended, but larger counterpart, as its proximity would have been a possible hindrance to the builders of the Dome of the Rock?

The "Dome of the Chain" name applied to the structure undoubtedly comes from the chain that hangs from the cupola inside (a chain also hangs from the cupola of the Dome of the Rock). Its significance is often taken from several pre-Islamic biblical traditions. One version is that it is King David's legendary chain of judgment whereby David hung the chain as a trial to prove if an accused individual was telling the truth or not. Those accused who were not truthful would not be able to grasp the chain. Others claim that it was here that David's son, King Solomon, administered justice. A third tradition holds this site to be the location of the ancient Temple's Holy of Holies — a claim based on words from a Hebrew commentary (Seder Rabba d'Bereshit) saying, "Jerusalem and the Temple stand hanging in chains of fire in the sky..."

A mentioned previously, both monuments share an octagonal plan and raises the possible symbolism of the number eight. Christians see the eighth day as the eternal day, sanctified by the resurrection of Jesus and octagonal monuments are inherently an interpretation of the resurrection. In Islamic eschatology, the number eight occurs in the description of Paradise — "Eight gates of gold and precious stones, wooden beams made of alternating silver and gold..."

When Jerusalem was captured by the Crusaders, all signs of Islamic origin were eliminated wherever possible. During this Christian period, the Dome of the Chain was known both as the Church of the Holy of Holies and the Chapel of St. James the Less in honor of Jesus' cousin who was the first bishop of Jerusalem. It was updated and renovated in 1263 during Sultan Baybers' reign and then again in 1537 by Suleiman the Magnificent, both of whom also ordered repairs to the Dome of the Rock. In 1996 it was covered with lead sheets.

Further information about Palestine Currency Board notes and coins can be found both on the internet at the author's web site: http://user.dtcc.edu/~berlin/palestin/palestin.htm and in the author's recently published book, The Coins and Banknotes of Palestine Under the British Mandate, 1927–1947. The author may be contacted by email at w3hb@yahoo.com.

## REGION PROVENCALE

Provence is the name of a region in southern France bordering on the Mediterranean Sea which includes among its principal cities Marseille, Toulon, Avignon and Arles. Recent archaeological discoveries prove that the settlement of Jews in Provence is of ancient date and goes back to at least the end of the first century C.E. The earliest documentary evidence for the presence of Jews dates from the middle of the fifth century in Arles and Jews were to be found in large numbers in Marseilles at the close of the sixth century. It was not until the 13th and especially the 14th century that Jews were to be found in numerous localities of Provence. The Jewish population reached a peak on the eve of 1348, when it probably numbered about 15,000.

Regulations governing the activity and administration of the communities in Provence are known from 1215 on, as evidenced from the community of Arles. From at least the end of the 13th century an intercommunity organization existed, though imposed by the government to facilitate the collection of the tax rendered by Jews to the sovereign of Provence. From the beginning of the 15th century, a special official, the "Conservateur des Juifs," was responsible for their protection and adjudication. This office was coveted by the leading families of Provence, because of the considerable revenue it brought in.

The principal occupation of the Jews in Provence was moneylending. The rate of interest charged was very low for that period, from 10 to 25%. However they only lent small sums destined for expenses as they did not possess the capital required for commercial loans on a large scale. Hence, not a single Jew is found among the creditors of King Rene of Provence (1434–80) although members of the Forbin family of Provence and of the Doria family of Genoa are frequently recorded.

Jews did not have the capital required to engage in large business upon their own initiative but often acted as brokers. They were therefore involved in most transactions of wheat and wine. They also traded in spices and textiles and the sale or lease of houses. The number of Jewish physicians in Provence was particularly great and in some towns they formed 5% of the Jewish working population. This would have amounted to one physician for every 100 persons if their services had been restricted to the Jewish community, but they also treated Christians, often holding the official function of municipal physician, and were particularly in demand when epidemics broke out. Their fees were nevertheless far lower than those of their Christian colleagues. In agriculture, Jews in Provence often

cultivated vineyards. They also owned and worked fields, as well as market gardens.

From having been subject to the direct authority of local lords, particularly the bishops, the Jews were placed under the jurisdiction of the count from the time of Charles (1246-85). In 1276 he limited the jurisdiction over the Jews which had been assumed by the Inquisition. In contrast, his successor Charles II (1285-1309) issued a regulation in 1294 which reintroduced several anti-Jewish measures of ecclesiastical origin. Employment of Christians by Jews was forbidden. Jews were barred from public functions and they were compelled to wear the distinctive badge. At the time of the expulsion of the Jews from France in 1306, those of Provence were exposed to vexations of a fiscal nature. In 1310 King Robert (1309-1345) ordered his officers to assist the Jews to collect the debts which were due them. He refused to consider a request of several ecclesiastics to expel the Jews, but stringently applied the separations measures which had been issued against them. Jewish quarters had developed in various towns spontaneously, but from 1341 at the latest, Jewish residence was confined to a separate quarter in the towns of Provence.

The first anti-Jewish disturbances on a large scale broke out in Provence in 1331. The severest anti-Jewish riots of the 14th century took place in 1348, at the time of the Black Death in Toulon, when the community was almost completely annihilated. The loss of life and property suffered by the Jews was so considerable that Queen Jeanne (1343–82) reduced the tax of the Jews of Provence to one-half of its usual rate for ten years. Before the end of this reprieve, new persecutions broke out in several towns in 1355.

The 15th century on the whole was an extremely favorable period for the Jews of Provence. In an edict of 1423, Queen Yolande extended protection to the Jews from arbitrary arrest if there were no reliable witnesses and every accuser of a Jew was required to identify himself by name and provide a surety. A Jew was not to be imprisoned if he could provide bail, unless for crime liable to corporal punishment. King Rene was known as "the good king," which applied to his treatment of the Jews as well. In 1443 he renewed the edicts of Queen Yolande which had been so favorable to the Jews. In 1454 he authorized the admission of Jews to every category of commerce, trade, and craft, as well as to certain public functions of a fiscal nature. He reduced the size of the Jewish badge and exempted the Jews from wearing it while traveling. He expressed his opposition to instances of forced baptism and even penalized those who had perpetrated such acts.

In 1481, after the death of King Rene, Provence became united with the Kingdom of France, from which the Jews had been "definitively" expelled in 1394. The privileges of the Jews of Provence were nevertheless renewed in 1482. However, from 1484, anti-Jewish disturbances broke out in Arles, Aix, and Marseilles. This looting and violence was perpetrated by bands of laborers hired for the harvest season from the mountain regions of Provence. In Tarascon, where they threatened the Jews, the latter were effectively protected by the officials of the town. Charles VIII, who, although aged only 14, already nominally governed France, took the Jews under his protection. However, a voluntary exodus began and was

accelerated when similar disorders were repeated in 1485. On this occasion, the bands of seasonal workers were reinforced by the inhabitants

of the town who took part in looting the Jewish quarter.

From 1484, one town after another called for their expulsion. In Marseilles, which had also demanded their expulsion, a veritable gang had been organized to rob the Jews, although protests were voiced against their departure. New anti-Jewish disorders broke out led by the Carmelites and Franciscans. Louis XII finally issued a general expulsion order against the Jews of Provence in 1498. Not enforced at the time, the order was renewed in 1500 and again at the end of July 1501. On this occasion, it was definitively implemented.

The only alternative to exile offered to the Jews of Provence was conversion to Christianity and a number chose such a solution. However, after a short while—if only to compensate partially for the loss of revenues caused by the departure of the Jews—the king imposed a special tax on them, referred to as "the tax of the neophytes." A roster dating from 1512 enumerates 122 to 164 persons (probably heads of families) subjected to this tax, living in 16 important localities of Provence. These converts and their descendants soon became the objects of social discrimination, a situation against which the parliament of Provence reacted in 1542. The campaign of discrimination was nevertheless maintained. A pamphlet published in 1611 attributed the miserable condition of the parliament of Provence to the neophytes.

At this time an exchange of letters began between the Jews of Arles and those of Constantinople. The correspondence was supposedly conducted at the close of the 15th century, when the Jews of Provence asked how they were to act in order to avoid expulsion. The Jews of Constantinople, according to this, counseled them to accept baptism while inwardly remaining Jews, stating that once they had attained the powerful positions to which the Christian religion admitted them, they would be able to avenge all the former miseries which they had endured.

During the second half of the 17th century a number of Jews attempted to reestablish themselves in Provence, following the edict issued in March 1669 which granted Marseilles the status of a "tax-free port." However, on complaints of the chamber of commerce of that town the parliament of Provence renewed the prohibitions against the residence of Jews there. Although the parliament authorized their temporary residence during the 18th century to enable them to trade at the fairs, a further attempt by a number of Jews to settle permanently was prevented.

The French Revolution abolished the administrative entity of Provence,

and under Napoleon, the Jews were finally granted equality.

In the aftermath of the First World War, there existed a severe shortage of small change necessary for local commerce. As a remedy, many town Chambers of Commerce issued emergency scrip, backed by the Banque du France, in order to alleviate the shortage. On the 31 December 1922, the Region Provencale issued a 1 franc note signed by presidents of the Chambers of Commerce of Avignon, Marseille and Nimes. The reverse of the note contains a map in which major towns or cities are shown. This note serves as the numismatic illustration for the article.



## BAKU'S JEWISH HISTORY

Among the world's oldest Jewish settlements, next to those in Israel, are in the former Soviet Union's Caucasian republic of Azerbaijan. Jews first reached these regions in the seventh and eighth centuries B.C.E. They came first as traders from Persia and later as refugees from Palestine after Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the first temple in Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. The Persian Jews founded the exotic Bukharan Jewish Community that spread through Central Asia while those who came directly from the Holy Land became ancestors of the Mountain Jews of the Caucasus.

Baku is a port on the western shore of the Caspian Sea, capital of Azerbaijan S.S.R. 1920–1991 and from 1992 the capital of Azerbaijan. A community of Persian Jews existed in Baku in the 18th century. The inhabitants, who were Muslims, harassed the Jews there and in 1814 threatened their lives following a blood libel. Although the Russian authorities offered them their protection, the Jews left and took refuge in Kuba, also in the province of Baku, where there was a large community of Caucasian Mountain Jews. Later, however, some returned to Baku.

A new chapter in the history of the community began in the 1870's with the development of the oil industry in Baku and its surroundings. Although restrictions were imposed to discourage Jews coming from European Russia, and on Jewish participation in the industry, the number of Jewish concessionaires and professional and skilled workers increased. Jews took a large share in initiating new enterprises and providing capital, in exploiting oil wells and setting up refineries, in developing transport facilities, and in marketing oil and oil products within Russia and abroad.

Among pioneer industrial companies owned by Jews was that of Dembo and Kagan, founded by A. Dembo of Kovno and Hayyim Cohen of Brest-Litovsk. Also active in this sphere were the Dembot brothers, in collaboration with Baron H. Guenzburg, Bikhowsky, Leites, Ickowich, and A. M. Feigel. A central position in oil exploitation, transportation, and marketing was occupied by the Rothschilds, who founded the Caspian-Black Sea Company and by the end of the 19th century headed a syndicate of many of the large oil companies.

Another large company was Polak and Sons, owned by Grigori Polak and his sons Saveli (Shevah) and Michael. Prominent in the field of technology was the chemical engineer Arkadi Beilin, who worked in a number of companies, including those of the Rothschilds, and after marrying the daughter of Grigori Polak joined Polak and Sons.

In 1913–14 the share of the Jewish companies in kerosene production in Baku reached 44% while the proportion of Jews occupied in oil products marketing was even greater. Jewish communal and Zionist institutions followed in the wake of the economic development. According to the 1897 census there were 2,341 Jews in Baku, of whom the majority were Caucasian with some from European Russia. The Jewish population continued to increase after the 1917 revolution through the influx of Mountain Jews who, deprived of their traditional livelihoods in the villages, moved to the towns. In 1926 the Jewish population numbered 21,995 (19,583 of European origin, 1,985 Caucasian Jews, and 427 Georgian Jews). According to the 1959 census Jews numbered 29,179 (3% of the total) in Baku and its vicinity. In 1970 the Jewish population was estimated at 80,000 (60,000 of European origin, the rest Tati, Georgian, and Bukharan). Most of the non-European Jews reside in the old part of the city.

In 1910, the City of Baku issued a revenue bond for general repairs and modernization of the city. The bond was for the amount of 4725 Rubles or 12,600 francs or 400 British Pounds Sterling as it was marketed for European investors. The rate of interest was 5%. The bonds were never

redeemed.



### JEWISH HISTORY IN PLZEN

Plzen is a city in Western Bohemia, now in the Czech Republic. Its Jewish community was one of the earliest in Bohemia. The first documentary record is a decree of 1338, signed by King Charles IV, in which the city's administrators were ordered, under penalty, to protect the Jews from molestation. In 1432 the Jewish community bought a plot from the city to be used as a cemetery. It also had a synagogue. Many transactions between Jews and Christians appear on the city records of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1504 Jews were expelled from Plzen as a result of a Host desecration charge, and the city was granted the privilege *de non tolerandis Judaeis*. From then until 1848 Jews lived in surrounding villages and only did their business in the town. Jews from all of western Bohemia and Prague attended the Plzen fairs and markets, which became very important in Jewish life.

In 1821–32 Jews were living without authorization in Plzen, and by 1854 there were 249 Jews in the town. A Jewish cemetery was consecrated in 1856 and a synagogue in 1859. In 1870 the community numbered 1,207. Jews were instrumental in the development of the city into an industrial center of worldwide repute.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the community was among the five largest and most affluent in Bohemia. A Moorish-style synagogue was erected in 1893 at a cost of nearly 1,000,000 crowns. The illustration is from a 1900 postcard.



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The community suffered from the conflicts between German liberal assimilationists, Czech Jews and Zionists. In 1892 the first B'nai B'rith Lodge of Bohemia was founded there. From 1918 the community supported two rabbis, one preaching in Czech and the other in German. Shehitah (religious method of slaughter) was forbidden in 1920 for "humanitarian" reasons. When the supreme court declared this prohibition illegal in 1934, the attempt to reintroduce Shehitah failed because of the higher price for kosher meat.

In the fall of 1938 Plzen became a refuge for many Jews from communities in the Sudeten area, occupied then by Germany. They were supported by funds previously designated for the building of an old-age home. After the German occupation (March 1939) there were persecutions and arrests of Jews, and the Jewish cemetery was desecrated. A plan to destroy the synagogue was given up only because it would have caused the destruction of an entire city block. In 1942 more than 2,000 Jews from all western Bohemia were concentrated in Plzen and deported to the Nazi extermination camps. The synagogue's ritual objects were transferred to a Central Jewish depot in Prague where the Nazis had plans to build a Jewish Museum to exhibit them after the destruction of all the Jews.

After World War II a community was reorganized in Plzen, numbering 293 in 1948. A memorial for the 3,200 victims of the Holocaust from Plzen and western Bohemia was dedicated at the new cemetery in 1951. The newly established community, considerably reduced in numbers, was still active in 1970, using the old synagogue and maintaining both cemeteries.

During the early 1920's emergency money was issued by the city to alleviate a severe coin shortage brought on by the collapse of the economy. The denomination was 20 haller, and several varieties exist.



#### SHAAREY ZEDAK CONGREGATION TOKEN

Chapman Abraham was probably the first Jewish resident in Detroit, to which he returned in 1765 after his escape from the Indians. Lt. Elias Meyer, of the British Army who commanded a force engaged in building a blockhouse in Detroit after Pontiac's siege was lifted may also have been of Jewish orgins.

No Jewish names are mentioned in Detroit's first directory published in 1837 but several Jews were listed in the second directory published in 1845. Due to its location, by 1850 Detroit was well on its way of becoming the commercial center of Michigan. It was home to about sixty Jewish families, mostly merchants and shopkeepers, including a religious orthodox German-Jewish couple by the names of Isaac and Sarah Cozens. They encouraged their fellow Jews to organize the city's first minyon (prayer gathering with ten men) which met in their home. Word of the minyon spread through the small Jewish community and by the Jewish New Year of Rosh Hashanah, this minyon expanded into the Beth El Society. Shortly afterwards the society grew to Temple Beth El.

The year in which Beth El completed the building of its synagogue, a congregational schism over the manner of the reciting of the ritual occurred and seventeen members withdrew from the synagogue. In 1862, they founded the Congregation Shaarey Zedak (Gates of Righteousness), which became Detroit's second oldest synagogue and the fourth in Michigan.

The influx of Jews from Eastern Europe after 1880 and the efforts of the Industrial Removal Office, which encouraged immigrants to seek their livelihoods in the interior of the country rather than to congregate in the overpopulated eastern cities, brought hundreds of Jews to Detroit. Shortly afterwards, the growth of automobile manufacturing cities such as Detroit, led to further development of Jewish communities.

The illustrated bronze synagogue token was issued by Shaarey Zedak, more than seventy years ago. The exact reason in unknown but possibly to commemorate *Hanukka*, and/or the seventieth anniversary of the synagogue congregation. The obverse has an inscription in Hebrew and English, Congregation Shaarey Zedak placed around the outer circle of the token. In the center circle is the building representing the congregation's first synagogue, below the date Dec 12 1862, and DETROIT. The reverse features a seven branched menorah, the word *Hanukka*, the Hebrew dates 5622-5691 and the biblical quotation "Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord."



### BYZANTINE EMPEROR JUSTINIAN I

Jewish communities existed in the Byzantine Empire throughout its history, from the foundation of Constantinople in 330 to the Ottoman conquest of the city in 1453. The centers of Jewish population and the status of the Jews there underwent drastic changes throughout this long period and shifted under the impact of events within and outside the empire. The attitude of the Byzantine rulers and society in practice, the methods employed by the Church, the language of official documents and legislation on details, combined to humiliate the Jews and narrow the confines of Jewish society and religion and the opportunities open to Jews. The Jewish religion was described as "baleful," and Jews were warned under threat of capital punishment, not to molest converts to Christianity. It was considered to be a crime to become a Jew and a Jew who circumcised his slave forfeited ownership of the slave.

Justinian I, emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, 527–565, was a virulent persecutor of non-Orthodox Christians and of Jews and Judaism. Justinian's famous *Corpus Juris Civilis* and his novellae (imperial instructions on specific subjects) included legislation on the Jews which virtually fixed the status of the Jew in Byzantine society for the next 700 years.

Justinian's novellae concerning the Jews are the following:

NOVELLA 37 (535 C.E.), forbidding Jews in the newly conquered province of North Africa to practice their religious rites. Synagogues were to be confiscated and, suitably consecrated, put to ecclesiastical use. Contrary to the prevailing Christian attitude, this novella attempted to view Judaism as a heresy and may have been motivated by suspicion of Jewish support for the Vandal regime overthrown by Justinian and the belief, prevalent in North Africa, in the alleged Jewish role in spreading heresy. Although it is known that the ancient synagogue in the city of Borion was transformed into a church and the local Jewish population was forced to accept Christianity, the novella was not put into effect. However, it was a dangerous precedent, symptomatic of the deterioration of the attitude toward the Jews under Justinian.

NOVELLA 45 (537 C.E.), prohibiting Jews any exemption from service on local municipal bodies, a service which entailed heavy financial burdens. Previously, Jews as well as gentiles could claim exemption on the grounds

of holding a religious office in their own community. It was stated that "Jews must never enjoy the fruits of office but only suffer its pains and penalties." If a Jew was found holding a higher office than a Christian, he had to pay a fine. This novella affected the western provinces for a short time.

NOVELLA 131 (545 C.E.), prohibiting sales of ecclesiastical property to Jews and declaring synagogues built on land subsequently shown to be ecclesiastical property subject to confiscation.

NOVELLA 146 (553 C.E.), supposedly in response to a Jewish request, forbids the insistence that the readings from the Pentateuch be exclusively in Hebrew from the Scrolls of the Law (Torah). They could be in Greek, Latin, or any other tongue and the Greek could be either that of the Septuagint or the translation of Aquila, which had rabbinical sanction. The use of the *Mishnah*, for exegesis was forbidden. Justinian argued that the *Mishnah* was not divinely inspired and could only mislead men. Rabbinical interpretations spread errors such as a denial of the existence of angels and the Last Judgment (probably a confusion with earlier Samaritan beliefs).

Just as the Byzantine emperor was the arbiter of Christian practice, Justinian also saw himself as the arbiter of the only other legal religion in his dominions. The extent of Justinian's interference in the service of the synagogue is open to question, but it attempted to impose a Christian interpretation of what Judaism and its holy texts should be.

Besides the novellae, Justinian allegedly prohibited the celebration of Passover if its date fell before the date of Easter. Erez-Israel was the scene of several outbursts against the empire, mainly on the part of the Samaritans, whose efforts to form their own kingdom were brutally suppressed in 529. In 556 Jews joined Samaritans in an anti-Christian riot in Caesarea in which several churches were burned down.



Byzantine Empire. Justinian I, 527-565 AD. AE Follis, Constantinople mint. Struck 538/539 AD. Helmeted and cuirassed facing bust, holding globus cruciger and shield.

### DAVID BEN-GURION

Founder of the State of Israel

David Ben-Gurion - Zionist leader and Israel's first and longest-serving Prime Minister - was born David Green in Plonsk, Poland in 1886 and educated in a Hebrew school established by his father, an ardent Zionist. Ben-Gurion became a Zionist and joined the Socialist-Zionist group Poalei Zion at the age of 17.

In 1906, Ben-Gurion immigrated to the Land of Israel, worked as a laborer in agricultural settlements, became immersed in Zionist politics and polemics and helped establish the Jewish self-defense group *Hashomer*. In 1912 he began to study law in Istanbul, but the outbreak of World War I led to his deportation, together with other leading Zionists, by the Ottoman authorities. Ben-Gurion spent the war years in the United States, where he married Paula Monbesz, a fellow Zionist, and was active in building an "American wing" of Labor Zionism. He returned to Palestine as a soldier of the Jewish Legion, a unit of the British Army created by Zeev Jabotinsky.

In the 1920s, Ben-Gurion was elected secretary-general of the *Histadrut* General Federation of Labor, a role which he regarded as a potential Power base for the realization of Zionist aims. He served as Secretary-General of the *Histadrut* until 1935, forging it into much more than a trade union: an all-embracing political, social and economic institution with its own network of factories, development corporations, cultural frameworks and health services and a financial institution. The *Histadrut* thus provided the economic infrastructure, as well as the social and political fabric, for the state-in-the-making.

Ben-Gurion subsequently played a central role in the amalgamation of *Ahdut Haavoda* and *Hapo'el Hatzair* into *Mapai*, which became the ruling political party during the first decades of statehood, with Ben-Gurion at the helm. His approach to socialism was pragmatic, seeking to attain national and socialist goals simultaneously. By 1935, Labor Zionism had become the most important faction in the Zionist movement, and Ben-Gurion was appointed to the key post of chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive - the "almost-government" of the Jews in Palestine - a post he held until 1948, when the State of Israel was established.

Throughout these years, Ben-Gurion set the course of Zionist history and molded the character of the Jewish state. Ben-Gurion abandoned the established Zionist policy of caution and gradualism, adopting a strong activist line. During World War II, his strategy in the conflict between British restrictions on Jewish immigration and settlement and the fact that Britain was fighting Nazi Germany was succinctly summarized in his statement that Zionists "would fight the war as if there was no White Paper and fight the White Paper as if there was no war. After the war, he challenged British authority by organizing mass "illegal" immigration and set de facto boundaries for a Jewish state by establishing Jewish settlements in all parts of the country. He pushed for development of a Jewish defense capability and pressed for the purchase of heavy armaments artillery and aircraft - when others spoke in terms of light infantry.

In 1948, as head of the provisional government, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the establishment of the state of Israel and the beginning of the "ingathering of the exiles"- moves of daring and vision, "willing" events of historic magnitude to happen. In this sense, Ben-Gurion belongs to the rare breed of leaders who are "event making men" rather than "eventful men" as defined by philosopher and historian Sidney Hook - the former being individuals who "drive" history in the direction they chart, the later merely "the right men at the right time."

In the first five years of statehood, BenGurion's forceful and charismatic leadership as Prime Minister led to waves of mass immigration which doubled the country's population. He directed absorption endeavors, investing the majority of the new nation's limited resources in integrating the immigrants; secured outlying areas by building settlements on the periphery; and instituted universal education in a non-partisan public school system.

As Minister of Defense, he masterminded and carried out the tense transition from underground organizations to a regular army, molding the character as well as the structure of the IDF. Later he presided over national projects such as Operation Magic Carpet (the airlift of Jews from Yemen), the construction of the National Water Carrier and innovative regional development projects. In the international arena, Ben-Gurion put his political career on the line to force approval of the highly controversial reparations agreement with West Germany. He led Israel out of the bloc of unaligned nations, adopting a pro-Western orientation. This move set the stage for a strategic alliance with France and Great Britain, which strengthened Israel in the diplomatic, economic and military spheres in the 1950s.

In 1953, drained by years of intensive public service, Ben-Gurion resigned from the government for two years. He settled in Kibbutz Sde Boker in the Negev, serving as a personal example to Israel's youth. Following the 1955 elections, he once again became Prime Minister.

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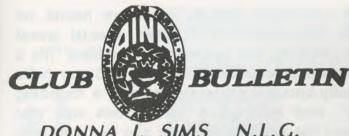
Reassessing defense policy, he advocated a more resolute response to terrorism from across the borders and adopted a defense strategy based on close cooperation with France, which lasted for over a decade. In the 1956 Sinai Campaign, although Israel eventually withdrew from Sinai under international pressure, it brought a halt to sabotage and terrorist attacks on settlements in the south, and an end to the Egyptian blockade of Israeli shipping in the Red Sea.

In 1963 Ben-Gurion resigned from the government once more in protest over the moral aspects of an intelligence fiasco that took place in 1954 bringing to an end almost three decades of leadership, including 13 years as Prime Minister of the State of Israel. Ben-Gurion made a bid to return to public life in 1965 by supporting electoral reform and the formation of a new party, *Rafi*, which gained only 10 seats in the *Knesset* elections. He remained a Member of *Knesset* for another five years, retiring from public life in 1970 at the age of 84. Ben-Gurion - one of the most influential figures in the course of modern Zionism - died in 1973 and was buried in Sde Boker.

The State of Israel issued a special coin set consisting of silver 25 IL commemorative coins in proof and uncirculated, and a 500 IL proof gold coin honoring David Ben-Gurion in 1974. This was during the days when the price of gold reached astronomical heights. The 35mm diameter 500 IL coin weighed 28 gm. and was priced at \$500.- It has been said that the total mintage of 211,088 for the three coins was much too great for the coin market to absorb. This led to the collapse of the Israel market when the investor's became burned and pulled out.







DONNA J. SIMS N.L.G.

Editor

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INS OF LONG ISLAND - Women of Israel and Shavuot were the study topics at the May meeting. Ben Gurion and Herzl were the topics of study at the June meeting. No meetings were held during the summer months. "Did you know that the names of the Hebrew months are borrowed from the Babylonians, who were the astronomers and calendar creators par excellence of the ancient Middle East. The names were adopted by the Israelites during the Babylonian exile following the destruction of the First Temple in 586 B.C.E. Previously, the months were referred to by numbers. The Arabs similarly took on the Babylonian names, and what's called lyar in Jerusalem, is called Ayyar in Amman."

INS/ICC OF LOS ANGELES - Member Ya'akov Mead made a very informative presentation on Russian Jewry at the May meeting. Ex. Director Sagi Solomon was the speaker at the June meeting and gave an excellent presentation on a portion of his collection, Concentration Camp Script with a lot of examples to complement his program. The July meeting was a lot of fun - COINO was played for a variety of prizes including several silver Eagles.

INS OF MICHIGAN - Florence Shook, of whom needs no introduction in the numismatic world, was special guest speaker at the May meeting, her presentation entitled "It's a Small World". Florence paid tribute to Dr. Saul Sugar (who had been a nationally-known opthomalogist and a founding member of INSM). And the reason behind this was that Florence talked about the medical problem she had had with her eyes and the doctors who cured her of whom almost all of these specialists had been trained by Saul.

INS OF NEW YORK - Study topics at the June meeting were: the letter "T"; topic - spear; calendar items - July 4th, Tammuuz - Shive'ah Asar B'Tammuuz (the day the Babylonians breached the walls of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E.). As always, members were challenged to bring in one numismatic item with all three categories. No meetings were held during the summer months.

Buy/Sell/Trade: Do you know of anyone or of an organization that would be interested in receiving a rather large number of The Shekel magazine? (I am assuming that these are loose copies) (JM-1); another writer inquires if there is anyone interested in purchasing bound copies of The Shekel, Volumes 1-32 (1968-1999 - 17 books) (JM-2). Please let me know if you are interested by sending an SASE to the address at the top of the previous page and indicate which number you are writing about.

Moments in Thought: Life is an opportunity, benefit from it; Life is a duty, complete it; Life is luck, make it; Life is a duty, complete it; Life is luck, make it; and Life is life, fight for it.

COMMENTS FROM DJS: Hope your summer months were fun, safe and healthy. Be well, be happy...

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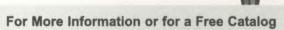
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### 25th Anniversary of "Operation Jonathan" State Medal

On June 27, 1976, an Air France jet was hijacked after it took off from Lod Airport in Israel by Arab and German terrorists. The terrorists ordered the plane to land in Entebbe in Uganda, after receiving approval from its President Idi Amin, and threatened to execute the Jewish hostages, unless their demands for the release of dozens of jailed terrorists were met

IDF officers led by Chief of Staff Motta Gur, presented a plan to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Minister of Defense Shimon Peres, to release the hostages, using IDF troops. At the head of the operation was General Dan Shomron, Assistant General Jonathan Netanyahu, commander of the IDF commando unit, was given the job to plan out the rule of the unit in the operation - to take control of the old terminal. to kill the terrorists, to release the hostages and bring them safely to

Four Hercules aircrafts took off on July 3 from Sharm el Shekh towards Africa.

Israel.

Exactly at midnight, according to Uganda time, the first aircraft carrying 29 combat soldiers landed at the Entebbe airport. The terrorists were killed. Yoni (Jonathan), however, was mortally wounded by a Kalaznikov bullet and four other hostages were killed. The released hostages were flown to Israel and were met with great emotion. This swept up the entire world in its wake.

Yoni Netanyahu was an intellectual and a fighter. His heroic acts became famous overnight and he became a source of inspiration for many in the country and around the world. *Operation Jonathan* became a symbol of Israel's courage and determination not to surrender to terrorism.

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